



United States Department of State

Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable  
Ted W. Lieu  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

NOV 21 2018

Dear Mr. Lieu:

Thank you for your letter of October 10 regarding the war in Yemen. The Department is working to provide Congress with its report on the military action of Saudi Arabia and its Coalition partners in Yemen as requested under Section 1265 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2018.

On October 30, Secretary Pompeo called for the cessation of hostilities, including missile and UAV strikes from Houthi-controlled areas into the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. On November 9, Secretary of Defense James Mattis released a statement supporting the decision by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, after consultations with the U.S. Government, to use the Coalition's own military capabilities to conduct inflight refueling in support of its operations in Yemen. Both State and DoD are focused on supporting resolution of the conflict, led by UN Special Envoy, Martin Griffiths. The U.S. and the Coalition are planning to collaborate on building up legitimate Yemeni forces to defend the Yemeni people, secure their country's borders, and contribute to counter Al Qaeda and ISIS efforts in Yemen and the region. The U.S. will also continue working with the Coalition and Yemen to minimize civilian casualties and expand urgent humanitarian efforts throughout the country.

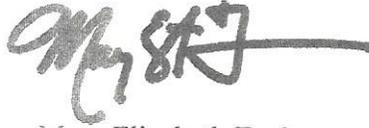
On November 9, Saudi Arabia, after consulting with the United States, requested the cessation of in-flight refueling support by the United States for its operations in Yemen. The administration supports this decision by Saudi Arabia to use the Coalition's own military capabilities, as we continue to push for a political solution to the conflict and diligent protection of civilian casualties.

Your letter also inquires about a 2016 memo written by an attorney within the Department's Office of the Legal Adviser in relation to the Yemen conflict. Bearing in mind the Department's strong interest in maintaining the confidentiality of legal advice that is provided in the context of this or any other question, the Department is not in a position to address any specific legal advice that may have been developed in relation to this inquiry.

Recognizing continued bipartisan interest from Congress, the Administration is appreciative of the continued dialogue we have had with key members on this issue and look forward to working together to support the United Nations' ongoing efforts on this new phase in Yemen. The United States strongly supports a political resolution to the conflict in Yemen and the need to bring peace to the Yemeni people, prevent a further deterioration of the humanitarian crisis, and meet regional security requirements.

We hope this information is helpful. Please feel free to contact us on any matter of concern.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary Elizabeth Taylor', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

Mary Elizabeth Taylor  
Assistant Secretary  
Bureau of Legislative Affairs